

# 1 INTRODUCTION

This document is a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) on the Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park Habitat Restoration and Outdoor Recreation Facilities Development Project (proposed project or project). It has been prepared under the direction of the lead agency, California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks), in accordance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code Sections 21000 et seq.) and the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations Sections 15000 et seq.).

## 1.1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

State Parks, with planning assistance from the Nature Conservancy (TNC), is proposing to implement the Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park Habitat Restoration and Outdoor Recreation Facilities Development Project on two parcels known as the Singh Unit and Nicolaus property (collectively known as the project site) along the Sacramento River within and adjacent to Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park (BSRSP or Park), west of the City of Chico in Butte County, California. The Singh Unit is owned by State Parks and located within BSRSP. The Nicolaus property is currently owned by TNC, but would be transferred to the State Parks, as part of the proposed project, prior to implementation of habitat restoration activities and recreation facilities development. It is located immediately adjacent to the Indian Fisheries subunit of BSRSP. Both the Singh Unit and Nicolaus property are currently in agricultural production (walnut and/or almond orchards).

### 1.1.1 HABITAT RESTORATION

The first project objective is to restore natural topography and vegetation on the Singh Unit and Nicolaus property. This includes the removal of two human-made berms on the Singh Unit; the removal of nonnative vegetation (including eucalyptus trees on the Singh Unit adjacent to River Road), and restoration of the following natural communities:

- ▶ cottonwood mixed riparian forest,
- ▶ valley oak savannah,
- ▶ mixed riparian forest,
- ▶ valley oak riparian forest, and
- ▶ native grasslands.

The Singh Unit and Nicolaus property present a unique opportunity for habitat restoration because they are located at the confluence of the Sacramento River, Big Chico Creek, and Mud Creek. The protection and restoration of habitat on these two parcels would aid in the recovery of special-status species, rehabilitate natural processes along the river, protect and restore riparian habitat, and improve water quality.

### 1.1.2 OUTDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT

The second project objective includes the transfer of ownership of the Nicolaus property from TNC to State Parks and development of outdoor recreation facilities on both the Nicolaus property and the Singh Unit. The property would become part of BSRSP prior to implementation of habitat restoration activities or outdoor recreation facilities development. The inclusion of the Nicolaus property within BSRSP, and restoration of the Nicolaus property and the Singh Unit, would present an opportunity to enhance and expand the Park's recreational and public access opportunities. Therefore, the project would include the creation of new trails on both properties, aligned to connect with existing and proposed trails and facilities within the Park. It would also result in the construction of new day-use and overnight camping facilities on the Nicolaus property. The Park headquarters would be relocated to the existing farm complex on the Nicolaus property, which is on higher, less frequently flooded ground compared to the current headquarters location (see Chapter 3, "Description of Proposed Project,"

Exhibits 3-1 through 3-3). By expanding outdoor recreation facilities and restoring habitat at BSRSP, this project would increase public accessibility to the middle reach of the Sacramento River, while providing more habitat for riparian plant species and river-dependent wildlife.

## **1.2 PURPOSE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT**

State Parks has prepared this DEIR to provide agencies and the public with information about the potential environmental effects of the project. This DEIR has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Pub. Res. Code Section 21000 et seq.) and the State CEQA Guidelines (14 California Code of Regulations [CCR] Section 15000 et seq.). CEQA defines a “project” as any activity directly undertaken by a public agency that “may cause either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment” (Pub. Res. Code Section 21065).

An EIR provides information for use in the planning and decision-making process for a project. The purpose of an EIR is not to recommend either approval or denial of a project. An EIR informs the public agency decision-makers and the general public of any significant environmental effects of a project, identifies feasible ways to minimize the significant effects, and describes reasonable alternatives to the project that can reduce environmental impacts. CEQA requires decision makers to balance the benefits of a proposed project with its unavoidable environmental effects in deciding whether to carry out a project. State Parks will consider the information presented in the EIR, as required by CEQA, when determining whether to approve the proposed project.

## **1.3 TIERED PROJECT-LEVEL EIR**

CEQA permits an EIR for a project to tier off a more general EIR for a previously prepared program, plan, policy, or ordinance in instances where the later project would be consistent with the earlier program, plan, policy, or ordinance (Pub. Res. Code Section 21094 and State CEQA Guidelines Section 15152). Tiering promotes efficiency in the CEQA process by encouraging the lead agency to limit an EIR on a later project to examining the significant effects that were not examined as significant effects in the prior EIR or are susceptible to substantial reduction or avoidance by specific revisions in the project (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15152).

This EIR for the Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park Habitat Restoration and Outdoor Recreation Facilities Development Project is a project-level document, tiered off the Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park General Plan and EIR (State Parks 2003, 2006) (Park Plan). The relationship between this project-level EIR and the Park Plan is described below.

### **1.3.1 BIDWELL-SACRAMENTO RIVER STATE PARK PRELIMINARY GENERAL PLAN AND EIR**

The Park Plan for the Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park was completed in 2006, and reflects State Park’s dual mandates as the steward of sensitive ecological resources and the provider of outdoor recreation opportunities (DPR 2003, 2006). The Park Plan consists of the following three documents:

- ▶ Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park Preliminary General Plan and DEIR (December 2003)
- ▶ Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park Recirculated DEIR (Agricultural Resources) (October 2005)
- ▶ Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park Comments and Responses to Comments on the Recirculated DEIR (January 2006)

On December 12, 2003, State Parks released the Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park Preliminary General Plan and DEIR to the general public and public agencies for review. The General Plan component of the Park Plan was prepared to guide future management direction at Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park over an approximate 20-year planning horizon. It contains a comprehensive and integrated set of Park-wide goals and guidelines for the long-term management of the Park that focus on protection of environmental resources, enhancements to

visitor use and recreation opportunities, and improvements to administration and operations of the Park. In addition, the General Plan provides a spatial dimension to Park planning through the use of area concept planning, which includes area-specific management and facility prescriptions for the subunits and potential property additions that were considered in the planning process. A range of new recreation facilities were proposed in the General Plan including, but not limited to, overnight campgrounds, day-use areas, trails, and a visitor center.

The EIR component of the Park Plan analyzed the potentially significant effects of the General Plan on the environment. In accordance with CEQA Section 21091 and State CEQA Guidelines Section 15087, a 45-day public review period for the DEIR was provided ending January 26, 2004. During the public review, comments were received from public agencies, private groups, and individuals on environmental issues. In response to the comments and a new policy guidance memorandum from the Resources Agency, State Parks re-evaluated its finding on the conversion of agricultural land, changed the finding to less than significant, and recirculated the portions of the DEIR that addressed agricultural resources (pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5). A 30-day public review period was provided for the Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park Recirculated DEIR (Agricultural Resources) from October 18, 2005 to November 17, 2005. State Parks received comments on the Recirculated DEIR, prepared responses, and published the Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park Comments and Responses to Comments on the Recirculated DEIR in January 2006.

Together, the Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park Preliminary General Plan and DEIR (December 2003), the Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park Recirculated DEIR (Agricultural Resources) (October 2005), and the Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park Comments and Responses to Comments on the Recirculated DEIR (January 2006) constitute the Final EIR (FEIR) for the Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park General Plan. The FEIR was certified and the General Plan was adopted by State Parks on March 10, 2006.

As described in Section 4.1.3 of the Park Plan, the General Plan FEIR provides an analysis of broad environmental issues at the general planning stage, and allows the environmental review for subsequent projects to be tiered, pursuant to or consistent with the General Plan. Based on review of the Park Plan, the proposed Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park Habitat Restoration and Outdoor Recreation Facilities Development Project is consistent with and implements the following Park Plan goals:

**Goal ER-1:** Preserve, maintain and, where necessary, rehabilitate the Park's ecosystems to protect natural features and processes and perpetuate biological resource functions.

- ▶ **Goal ER-1.1:** Protect and restore sensitive natural communities, including wetland, valley oak woodland, and other successional riparian woodland plant communities that support the Park's abundant natural resources and function in the evolving hydrological and geomorphologic conditions of the middle reaches of the Sacramento River.
- ▶ **Goal ER-1.2:** Manage for the perpetuation of special-status plant, terrestrial wildlife, and aquatic species within the Park, in accordance with state and federal laws.
- ▶ **Goal ER-1.3:** Reduce the presence of invasive nonnative plant species.
- ▶ **Goal ER-1.4:** Reduce the numbers of feral and other problematic nonnative animals, particularly those that have a negative effect on the populations of native special-status species.
- ▶ **Goal ER-1.5:** Preserve and enhance, as appropriate, habitat corridors provided by the Park and between the Park and other areas of similar habitats to maintain or increase their usage by native plant and animal species.

**Goal ER-2:** Protect the culturally significant resources within the Park, providing interpretive and educational opportunities, where feasible.

- ▶ **Goal ER-2.1:** Locate and assess the significance of cultural resources within the Park

**Goal ER-3:** Operate the Park within the context of natural watershed functions, and promote watershed health, wherever possible.

- ▶ **Goal ER-3.1:** Allow for the natural meander of the Sacramento River where the river course and the associated flood events would be compatible with public safety, environmental protection considerations, and principles of the Sacramento River Conservation Area Handbook (SCRAF 2002).
- ▶ **Goal ER-3.2:** Operate Park facilities and manage resources in a manner that does not contribute to degradation in water quality of the watershed.

**Goal ER-4:** Preserve, perpetuate, and provide access to the distinctive landscape qualities that reinforce the general character of Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park.

- ▶ **Goal ER-4.1:** Preserve the natural landscape appearance of the Sacramento River corridor and its tributaries.
- ▶ **Goal ER-4.3:** Establish a uniform and consistent appearance of facilities and landscapes within the Park that are aesthetically pleasing and compatible with the landscape setting.

**Goal VU-1:** Provide recreational opportunities associated and compatible with the unique resources of the Sacramento River and its riparian and oak woodland environments.

- ▶ **Goal VU-1.3:** Develop additional day-use facilities near recreational or aesthetic amenities based on availability of appropriate sites.
- ▶ **Goal VU-1.4:** Develop a range of overnight camping opportunities in the Park based on availability of appropriate sites.
- ▶ **Goal VU-1.6:** Provide high quality wildlife observation opportunities throughout the Park.

**Goal VU-2:** Provide educational and interpretive opportunities associated with the unique natural and cultural resources of the Sacramento River and its riparian and oak woodland environments.

- ▶ **Goal VU-2.3:** Disseminate interpretive and educational information to Park visitors and the local community via non-staffed facilities.
- ▶ **Goal VU-2.4:** Evaluate opportunities to develop a visitor center to provide multiple visitor services at an easily accessible location that serves local and regional residents.

**Goal VU-3:** Provide safe, convenient, and well-connected facilities for multiple modes of transportation within and between the Park's subunits.

- ▶ **Goal VU-3.1:** Provide for safe and readily available access to the Park from the local roadway system serving the Park.
- ▶ **Goal VU-3.3:** Provide car and bus parking spaces for points of interest where environmentally compatible and as space allows.
- ▶ **Goal VU-3.4:** Provide for an interconnecting trail network within the Park, where feasible, and consider linkages to regional trail systems where appropriate.
- ▶ **Goal VU-3.6:** Provide access to recreational opportunities to all people regardless of physical limitations.
- ▶ **Goal VU-3.7:** Develop a system of signage that directs, orients, and educates visitors within the Park.

- ▶ **Goal VU-3.8:** Provide for the safety of Park visitors while circulating within the Park.

**Goal AO-1:** Establishment of well-defined Park boundaries that can serve as base for future expansion in accordance with the vision and goals for the Park.

- ▶ **Goal AO-1.2:** Expand the Park to promote consolidated management of natural resources and recreational opportunities.

**Goal AO-2:** Manage, maintain, and operate Park facilities to meet visitor needs.

- ▶ **Goal AO-2.1:** Establish a centralized location for administrative facilities that promotes efficient management of the Park's resources.
- ▶ **Goal AO-2.2:** Maintain Park facilities to meet visitor needs.
- ▶ **Goal AO-2.3:** Provide a safe environment for visitors to the Park.

**Goal AO-3:** Develop facilities within the parameters of the Park's natural and physical environment, and in consideration of the safety of Park visitors.

- ▶ **Goal AO-3.1:** Site and design appropriate Park facilities to embrace natural river processes.
- ▶ **Goal AO-3.2:** Develop facilities that are supported by established infrastructure systems.
- ▶ **Goal AO-3.3:** Develop facilities that do not conflict with ambient air quality and noise standards.
- ▶ **Goal AO-3.4:** Ensure the safety of Park visitors during the planning and development of new Park facilities.
- ▶ **Goal AO-3.5:** Incorporate principles and practices of sustainability into the Park's design, improvements, and maintenance and operations, and utilize adaptive management principles, to the extent feasible.

**Goal AO-4:** Cooperate with local landowners, communities, and public agencies to foster coordinated management of public lands along the Sacramento River.

- ▶ **Goal AO-4.1:** Allow local communities the opportunity to provide input into Park planning and environmental review processes.
- ▶ **Goal AO-4.4:** Work with private landowners in proximity to the Park to minimize conflicts associated with the mixed public and private land ownership pattern in the area.
- ▶ **Goal AO-4.5:** Establish a multi-agency approach to regional public lands management where practical and feasible.

Because the project is consistent with the Park Plan goals, the Park Plan will provide the more general, first-tier environmental document, and this DEIR will focus on analyzing the issues specific to the project.

## 1.4 CONSISTENCY WITH THE CALFED PROGRAM

The current planning for the proposed project is funded by a CALFED Ecosystem Restoration Program (CALFED ERP Program) grant (ERP-02-P16D). The mission of the CALFED ERP Program is to develop a long-term comprehensive plan that will restore ecological health and improve water management for beneficial uses of the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Bay-Delta). The Record of Decision (ROD) for the approval of the CALFED Program documents the final selection of the Preferred Program Alternative that

includes broad programmatic actions to restore ecosystem function to the Bay-Delta. The ERP is among the set of linked programmatic actions comprising the Preferred Program Alternative to be implemented over a 30-year period. The goal of the ERP is to improve and increase aquatic and terrestrial habitats and improve ecological functions in the Bay-Delta system to support sustainable populations of diverse and valuable plant and animal species (CALFED 2000a). The ROD includes a summary list of programmatic actions designed to achieve the objectives of the ERP. The most applicable of these actions to the proposed project specifies protection and restoration of the Sacramento River meander corridor consistent with SRCA river corridor management plans and processes.

#### **1.4.1 CALFED FINAL PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT**

The CALFED Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement and Environmental Impact Report (CALFED Final PEIS/EIR) provides a very broad, programmatic analysis of the general effect of implementing the multiple components of the CALFED Program over a 30-year period (2000–2030) across two-thirds of the State of California. The analysis of impacts in the CALFED Final PEIS/EIR is not intended to address any site-specific environmental effects of individual projects; therefore, the analyses of direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts contained in the CALFED Programmatic document are not sufficiently detailed for purposes of this DEIR, which focuses on a specific project and a specific affected geographic area over a discreet time frame. Preparation of this DEIR for the proposed project has included reviews of applicable chapters and sections contained in the CALFED Final PEIS/EIR and the ROD to develop background information, assess consistency of the proposed project with the CALFED Program Preferred Program Alternative, and provide mitigation guidance. This DEIR, tiered from the Park Plan, includes an independently developed analysis of the impacts of the proposed project, including direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts, and an analysis of alternatives to the proposed project. The proposed riparian habitat restoration included in this project is consistent with the programmatic guidance contained in the CALFED Final PEIS/EIR. Because the planning phase of the proposed project is funded by a CALFED ERP Program grant (ERP-02-P16D), it is also consistent with the ROD for the approval of the CALFED Program. Furthermore, it is consistent with the Multi-Species Conservation Strategy (MSCS), which is part of the comprehensive regulatory compliance strategy that is integrated with the CALFED Final PEIS/EIR.

Preparation of this DEIR included reviews of the following chapters, sections, and plans that are parts of the CALFED Final PEIS/EIR, as well as the ROD documenting the final selection of the Preferred Program Alternative:

- ▶ Chapter 1, “Program Description,” was reviewed for background information.
- ▶ Section 5.1, “Water Supply and Water Management,” was reviewed for background information and to determine consistency of the proposed project with the CALFED Program Preferred Program Alternative.
- ▶ Section 5.2, “Bay-Delta Hydrodynamics and Riverine Hydraulics,” was reviewed for background information and to determine consistency of the proposed project with the Preferred Program Alternative.
- ▶ Section 5.3, “Water Quality,” was reviewed for background information and to determine consistency of the proposed project with the Preferred Program Alternative.
- ▶ Section 6.1, “Fisheries and Aquatic Ecosystems,” was reviewed for background information and to determine consistency of the proposed project with the Preferred Program Alternative.
- ▶ Section 6.2, “Vegetation and Wildlife,” was reviewed was reviewed for background information and to determine consistency of the proposed project with the Preferred Program Alternative.

- ▶ Section 7.1, “Agricultural Land and Water Use,” was reviewed for background information and to determine consistency of the proposed project with applicable programmatic actions under the ERP as part of the Preferred Program Alternative. Mitigation Strategies 4, 10, 11, 18 and 19 were incorporated into the development of the proposed project in order to avoid potential impacts to agricultural lands and water use.
- ▶ Section 7.7, “Recreation Resources,” was reviewed for background information and to determine consistency of the proposed project with the Preferred Program Alternative. The proposed project supports Mitigation Strategies 1, 9, 11, 15, and 17 through the development of new recreation facilities.
- ▶ Section 7.11, “Cultural Resources,” was reviewed to determine consistency of the proposed project with the Preferred Program Alternative.
- ▶ Ecosystem Restoration Program Plan, Volume II: Ecological Management Zone Visions, was used as a source of information for the project description and to assess consistency of the proposed project with specified restoration targets for the Sacramento River Ecological Management Zone.
- ▶ Ecosystem Restoration Program Plan, Strategic Plan for Ecosystem Restoration, Appendix D: Draft Stage 1 Actions, was reviewed to assess consistency of the proposed project with Stage 1 programmatic actions for the mainstem Sacramento River.
- ▶ Multi-Species Conservation Strategy, was reviewed to determine consistency of the proposed project with conservation goals for particular species and community types.
- ▶ ROD for the CALFED Program was reviewed to assess consistency of the proposed project with applicable programmatic actions under the Ecosystem Restoration Program as part of the Preferred Program Alternative.

## **1.4.2 CALFED PROGRAM MULTI-SPECIES CONSERVATION STRATEGY**

The CALFED Program Multi-Species Conservation Strategy (MSCS) was developed for the CALFED Program in accordance with the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) and California’s Natural Community Conservation Planning Act (NCCPA). The MSCS is a comprehensive programmatic strategy for the conservation of numerous species of fish, wildlife and plants and their habitat based on key CALFED Program elements, such as the ERP and the Environmental Water Account. Implementation of the MSCS is intended to ensure that entities implementing CALFED Program actions will satisfy the requirements of ESA, CESA and the NCCPA. State Parks and TNC will follow the CALFED Program MSCS for any necessary California Endangered Species Act (CESA) and Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) compliance for the project. Refer to Section 4.4, “Biological Resources,” for further discussion of MSCS goals for wildlife and plant species that occur in the project area.

## **1.5 COMMENTS ON THE NOTICE OF PREPARATION**

The Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the proposed project was distributed on August 28, 2007 to responsible agencies, interested parties, and organizations, as well as private individuals that may have an interest in the project. The NOP was filed with the State Clearinghouse and posted on the State Parks website (August 29, 2007); availability of the NOP was advertised in the Chico Enterprise Record (September 8, 2007); email notification was provided to the Sacramento River Conservation Area Forum (SRCAF) (August 30, 2007); and an announcement was made to the SRCAF technical advisory council on September 8, 2007. The NOP provided a general project description and solicited the views of agencies and the public on the project and the scope of this environmental analysis. State Parks also held a scoping meeting for the public and agencies on September 19, 2007. The purpose of the NOP and the public scoping meeting were to provide notification that an EIR is being prepared for the project and to solicit guidance on the scope and content of the environmental document. Written comments were received and comments were presented by individuals at the public scoping meeting. Appendix A

of this DEIR contains a copy of the NOP, scoping meeting notes, copies of written comments received, and a summary of how comments have been addressed in this DEIR.

Comments were presented on the following issues (including references to the sections or chapters in this DEIR where relevant discussions are included):

- ▶ width of the proposed grassland buffers in the habitat restoration plans (Chapter 3 and Section 4.4)
- ▶ type of habitat proposed in the restoration plans for the slough that runs through the Singh parcel (Chapter 3 and Section 4.3)
- ▶ consideration for drainage, groundwater, and topography in the habitat restoration plans (Chapter 3 and Section 4.3)
- ▶ fencing of the project sites (Chapter 3)
- ▶ protection of neighboring land owners from trespassing, fire hazards, and pests/invasive species (Chapter 3 and Section 4.4)
- ▶ description of habitat restoration management considerations (regional plans and key players) (Chapter 3)
- ▶ description of environmental setting and all project elements (Chapter 3)
- ▶ description of how recreation facilities would be designed to be protective of neighboring properties during flood events (Chapter 3)
- ▶ potential effects of cancellation of Williamson Act Contract(s) (Section 4.2)
- ▶ potential effects associated with the above-ground fuel storage tank on the Nicolaus property (Section 4.1)
- ▶ potential effects on traffic, particularly on River Road (Section 4.1)
- ▶ potential effects to wildlife (Section 4.4)
- ▶ description of cumulative projects (Chapter 5)
- ▶ potential need for permits from the Regional Water Quality Control Board (Section 4.3)
- ▶ procedural issues related to public review of the DEIR, certification of the EIR, and project approval (Chapter 1)

## **1.6 SCOPE OF THE EIR**

The scope of this tiered DEIR was developed based on the preliminary analysis of the proposed project; review of the Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park Preliminary General Plan and FEIR; review of the CALFED Final PEIS/EIR; a site visit; identified agency concerns; comments received during a public scoping meeting held on September 19, 2007 (Appendix A); and comments received on the Notice of Preparation (NOP) (Appendix A).

As a result of the review of existing information and the scoping process, it was determined that the following issue topics would be the focus of this DEIR analysis:

- ▶ agricultural resources
- ▶ hydrology and water quality



- ▶ biological resources
- ▶ cultural resources
- ▶ air quality and climate change

Under the State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15128, 15143 and 15152, a lead agency may limit an EIR's discussion of environmental effects when such effects are not considered potentially significant or when a General Plan EIR (or Staged EIR, Program EIR, or Master EIR) adequately addresses the potential impact. Therefore, based on the scoping process, the following issues are tiered from the Park Plan and addressed in a lesser level of detail in this DEIR:

- ▶ aesthetics/visual resources
- ▶ geology and soils
- ▶ hazards and hazardous materials
- ▶ land use and planning
- ▶ mineral resources
- ▶ noise
- ▶ population and housing
- ▶ public services
- ▶ recreation
- ▶ transportation/traffic and circulation
- ▶ utilities and service systems

Refer to Section 4.1 for additional discussion of impacts found to be less than significant and adequately addressed in the Park Plan.

## **1.7 AGENCY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **1.7.1 LEAD AGENCY**

State Parks is the lead agency for the project. State Parks has the principal responsibility for approving and carrying out the project and for ensuring that the requirements of CEQA have been met. After the EIR public-review process is complete, the Director of State Parks is the party responsible for certifying that the EIR adequately evaluates the impacts of the project. The Director also has the authority to either approve, modify, or reject the project.

### **1.7.2 TRUSTEE AGENCIES**

Trustee agencies under CEQA are designated public agencies with legal jurisdiction over natural resources that are held in trust for the people of the State of California and would be affected by a project, whether or not the agencies have authority to approve or implement the project. The following agencies are identified as trustee agencies for the proposed project:

- ▶ California Department of Fish and Game (DFG), Region 2, with trustee jurisdiction over fish and wildlife and their habitat

### **1.7.2 RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES**

Responsible agencies are public agencies, other than the lead agency, that are anticipated to have discretionary-approval responsibility for reviewing, carrying out, or approving elements of a project. Responsible agencies should participate in the lead agency's CEQA process, review the lead agency's CEQA document, and use the document when making a decision on project elements. Several agencies may have responsibility for, or jurisdiction over, the implementation of elements of the project. These agencies may include the following:

- ▶ Central Valley Flood Protection Board
- ▶ Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 5 (Redding)

### 1.7.3 OTHER INTERESTED AGENCIES

Other agencies that may have an interest in the proposed project include:

- ▶ Butte County
- ▶ California Air Resources Board
- ▶ California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection
- ▶ California Department of Food and Agriculture
- ▶ California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
- ▶ California Department of Health Services
- ▶ California Department of Transportation, District 3
- ▶ California Department of Water Resources
- ▶ Native American Heritage Commission
- ▶ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association, National Marine Fisheries Service
- ▶ State Office of Historic Preservation
- ▶ State Water Board (formerly known as State Water Resources Control Board), Division of Water Quality
- ▶ U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- ▶ U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

### 1.7.4 PERMITS AND APPROVALS

The following permits and approval actions are likely to be required before implementation of the proposed project:

- ▶ Central Valley Flood Protection Board: Encroachment permit for removal of the existing Sacramento River berm and construction and maintenance associated with restoration and public access use of the project area.
- ▶ Regional Water Quality Control Board: General Construction Storm Water Permit (Order No. 99-08-DWQ) - Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan; Waste Discharge Requirements (potentially for low-threat discharges from construction dewatering activities that discharge to surface waters, if necessary).

## 1.8 PUBLIC REVIEW PROCESS

This DEIR is being circulated for public review and comment for a period of 45 days, from **January 31, 2008** through **March 17, 2008**. During this period, comments from the general public, organizations, and agencies, may be submitted to the lead agency on the DEIR's accuracy and completeness. Comments may be submitted to:

Denise Reichenberg  
 Sector Superintendent  
 California Department of Parks and Recreation Northern Buttes District/Valley Sector  
 525 Esplanade  
 Chico, California 95926  
 (530) 895-4304

This DEIR and the Park Plan, from which this DEIR is tiered, are available for review at the following locations:

California Department of Parks and Recreation  
525 Esplanade  
Chico, California 95926  
(530) 895-4304

Chico Branch of the Butte County Library  
1108 Sherman Avenue  
Chico, California 95926

Oroville Branch of the Butte County Library  
1820 Mitchell Avenue  
Oroville, California 95966

Colusa County Free Library  
738 Market Street  
Colusa, California 95932

Princeton Branch Library  
232 Prince Street  
Princeton, California 95970

Tehama County Library  
645 Madison Street  
Red Bluff, California 96080

Scotty's Landing  
12609 River Road  
Chico, California 95973

California State Parks Website: <http://www.parks.ca.gov/>

Under the "Public Interest" tab, click on "CEQA Notices"  
Click on "CEQA Notices for Northern California Parks"  
You will then see the project's CEQA documents listed under "Butte County"

A public workshop and hearing will be held on the DEIR on **Tuesday February 19, 2008 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.** at the Bidwell Mansion SHP Visitor Center located at 525 The Esplanade, Chico CA 95926. Upon completion of the public review and comment period, an FEIR will be prepared that will include both written and oral comments on the DEIR received during the public-review period, responses to those comments, and any revisions to the DEIR made in response to public comments. The DEIR and FEIR will comprise the EIR for the project.

Before adopting the project, the lead agency, State Parks, is required to certify that the EIR has been completed in compliance with CEQA, that the decision-making body reviewed and considered the information in the EIR, and that the EIR reflects the independent judgment of the lead agency.

## 1.9 EIR ORGANIZATION

This DEIR is organized as follows:

Chapter 1, “Introduction,” summarizes the purpose and scope of the proposed project; and explains the scope and uses of this document.

Chapter 2, “Summary,” summarizes the conclusions of the environmental analysis.

Chapter 3, “Description of the Proposed Project,” describes the proposed action and project purpose, the related planning and management efforts for the middle Sacramento River, and the proposed project characteristics.

Chapter 4, “Environmental Analysis of the Proposed Project,” describes the local and regional environmental setting, the regulatory background, and the effects of the proposed project for each of the topics listed above under “Scope of the EIR.”

Chapter 5, “Cumulative Impacts,” describes the cumulative impacts of the proposed project.

Chapter 6, “Other CEQA-Required Sections,” discusses growth-inducing effects, significant unavoidable effects on the environment, and irreversible or irretrievable commitments of resources.

Chapter 7, “Alternatives,” describes the alternatives to the proposed project considered in this analysis and the evaluation of the environmental effects of those alternatives.

Chapter 8, “Agency Roles and Report Preparers,” lists the individuals who prepared this DEIR.

Chapter 9, “References,” lists the sources of information cited throughout this DEIR.

Appendix A, “Project Scoping,” includes the NOP issued for the project, a spreadsheet of comments received, and an explanation of how comments have been addressed in the EIR.

Appendix B, “Hydrologic Analysis,” includes the Flood Neutral Hydraulic Analysis for the Nicolaus and Singh Properties, Sacramento River RM 194–195, August 31, 2007.

Appendix C, “Restoration and Management Plans,” including the Riparian Habitat Restoration Plan, Singh Unit, Sacramento River (RM 194), Bidwell Sacramento River State Park and the Restoration Design and Management Plan, Nicolaus Property, Sacramento River (RM 195), September 2007.

Appendix D, “Recreation Facilities Plans,” including the Singh and Nicolaus Public Access and Recreation Concept Plan, March 29, 2007.

Appendix E, “Cultural Resources Inventory,” including the Cultural Resources Inventory and Assessment, Singh and Nicolaus Restoration and Public Access Project, December 2006.

Appendix F, “Air Quality Modeling Data,” including the assumptions, input parameters, and modeling results, December 2007.

## 1.10 DOCUMENTS INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE

In accordance with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15150 and 15152, the following documents are incorporated by reference into this DEIR, and they are available for review at the locations listed below. The CALFED Final PEIS/EIR is incorporated by reference solely for the purpose of providing background information, to

demonstrate consistency of this habitat restoration project with the overall CALFED Program, and to provide mitigation guidance.

State Parks (California Department of Parks and Recreation). 2003 (December). Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park Preliminary General Plan and DEIR. Prepared by EDAW. Sacramento, CA.

State Parks (California Department of Parks and Recreation). 2005 (October). Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park Recirculated DEIR (Agricultural Resources). Prepared by EDAW. Sacramento, CA.

State Parks (California Department of Parks and Recreation). 2006 (January). Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park Comments and Responses to Comments on the Recirculated DEIR. Prepared by EDAW. Sacramento, CA.

The Park Plan documents are available for review at the office of the lead agency:

California Department of Parks and Recreation  
525 Esplanade  
Chico, California 95926  
(530) 895-4304

CALFED Bay-Delta Program. 2000 (July). Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement and Environmental Impact Report and portions of the Ecosystem Restoration Program Plan. Sacramento, CA.

CALFED Bay-Delta Program. 2000 (August 28). Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement and Environmental Impact Report. Programmatic Record of Decision. Sacramento, CA.

The CALFED documents are available for review at:

[http://calwater.ca.gov/calfed/library/library\\_archive\\_rod.html](http://calwater.ca.gov/calfed/library/library_archive_rod.html)

## **1.11 STANDARD TERMINOLOGY**

The DEIR uses several standard terms as follows:

*Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park Habitat Restoration and Outdoor Recreation Facilities Development Project* is the proposed project, which would involve restoration of native riparian habitat and development of recreational facilities on two parcels, the Singh Unit owned by State Parks and the Nicolaus property owned by TNC.

*Park Plan* refers to the Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park Preliminary General Plan and DEIR, the Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park Recirculated DEIR (Agricultural Resources), and the Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park Comments and Responses to Comments on the Recirculated DEIR, which constitute the FEIR for the Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park General Plan.

*Project site* refers to the Singh Unit and the Nicolaus property, proposed for habitat restoration and recreation facilities.

*Project area* refers collectively to the area affected by the project, including the Singh Unit, the Nicolaus property, portions of the Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park, and adjacent properties.

*Study area* refers to a geographic area along the Sacramento River that extends between river mile (RM) 194 and RM 195 and generally corresponds to the study area for the hydrological analysis in this DEIR.

*Thresholds of significance* means criteria that are established by the lead agency to define the level at which an impact would be considered significant. Criteria are defined by a lead agency based on examples found in CEQA or the State CEQA Guidelines, scientific and factual data relative to the lead agency jurisdiction, views of the public in the affected area, the policy/regulatory environment of affected jurisdictions, or other factors.

*No impact* means no change from existing conditions.

*Beneficial impact* means an effect that may enhance or improve an existing environmental condition.

*Less-than-significant impact* means no substantial adverse change in the physical environment (no mitigation needed).

*Potentially significant effect* on the environment (or potentially significant impact) means a potential effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the environment (mitigation is recommended, because potentially significant impacts are treated the same as significant impacts in the CEQA process).